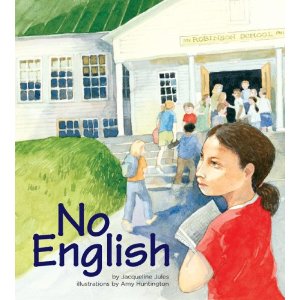
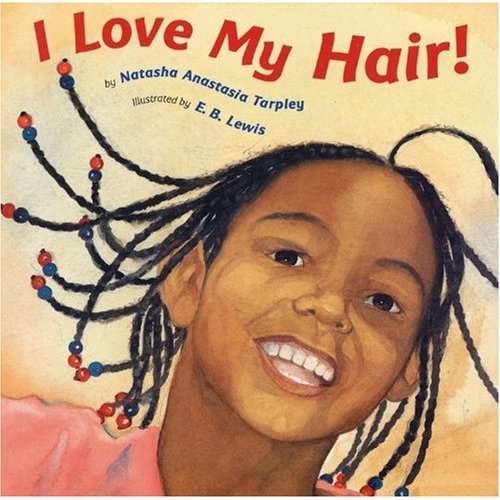
[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://img1.fantasticfiction.co.uk/images/h1/h7390.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/c/sandra-cisneros/hairs-pelitos.htm&usg=__A4S1YnaAJSmrR5d3xvcCZ2MIGGA=&h=251&w=316&sz=12&hl=en&start=1&zoom=1&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=JcMc9llowtGjjM:&tbnh=93&tbnw=117&prev=/images?q=hairs+pelitos&um=1&hl=en&sa=N&rlz=1T4ADBR_enUS302US304&tbs=isch:1)***Hairs/Pelitos*** by Sandra Cisñeros (Apple Soup/Knopf, 1994). This picture book conveys the diversity within Latino cultures through the simple story of a young girl talking about the different kinds of hair her family members have.

Ages 4-8.

Jules, J. (2008) No English. Illustrated by A. Huntington. Mitten.

Ages 4-8

*[](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/images/1587264749/ref=dp_image_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books)No English* is all that Blanca, the new girl from Argentina, says. She spends her time drawing pictures instead of doing class work, and that hardly seems fair to second-grader Diane. One misunderstanding follows another until Diane begins to see how afraid Blanca must feel in their classroom. Their teacher, Mrs. Bertram, helps her clas s understand that "different” is just different, not strange or weird. She encourages the students to learn about Blanca’s home country. Diane must make things right, but how will she do that when they don't speak the same language?

Tarpley, N. A. (1998). I love my hair. Illustrated by E.B.Lewis. New York: Little Brown Children’s Books. Ages 4-8.

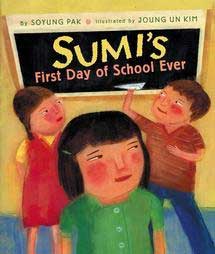
Tarpley’s first book for children joins a growing list of titles about African-American hair--linking it to issues of self- esteem and acceptance. Keyana tells how her mother sits her down each night to comb her hair and to rub coconut oil into her scalp; Mama’s touch and her words are always heartening. Keyana is lucky to have her head of hair because “it’s beautiful and you can wear it in any style you choose.'” It can be woven into a puffy bun, braided into corn rows, grown into an Afro style that is partly a political statement, or pulled into two ponytails that “stick out on either side of my head and slap in the air like a pair of wings,” making her feel free enough to fly. Lewis’s imaginative and warm interpretations of these exchanges as well as the inclusion of bits of African-American cultural history expand the personal content.

Recorvits, H. (2003). [My name is Yoon](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0374351147/celebratincul-20). Illustrated by G. Swiatkowska. Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Ages 4-8.

Yoon’s name means Shining Wisdom, and when she writes it in Korean, it looks happy, like dancing figures. But her father tells her that she must learn to write it in English. In English, all the lines and circles stand alone, which is just how Yoon feels in the United States. Yoon isn’t sure that she wants to be YOON. At her new school, she tries out different names – maybe CAT or BIRD. Maybe CUPCAKE!  
Helen Recorvits’s spare and inspiring story about a little girl finding her place in a new country is given luminous pictures filled with surprising vistas and dreamscapes by Gabi Swiatkowska.

Pak, S. (2003). Sumi’s first day of school. Illustrated by J. U. Kim. Viking. Ages 4-8.

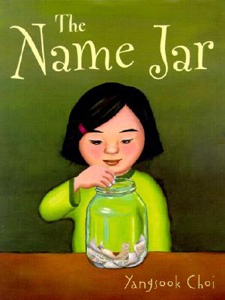
Sumi, a Korean American child, is lonely and afraid when she starts school, but with the help of a kind teacher an d a friendly classmate, she comes to realize that school may be "not-so-lonely, not-so-scary, not-so-mean.” Simple words and clear, brightly colored expressive pictures stay true to the small child’s perspective, showing close up her confusion and hurt. When Sumi first enters the classroom, she’s shown outside the group; but when she gets to know a girl in the schoolyard, their arms are parallel as they draw pictures in the dirt. As in Recorvits’ My Name Is Yoon [BKL Mr 15 03], the honesty will touch kids. Pak acknowledges the meanness (one boy "stuck out his tongue . . . squished his eyes”), and even non-immigrant newcomers to school will recognize the feeling of dislocation and the language and gestures that seem to make no sense.

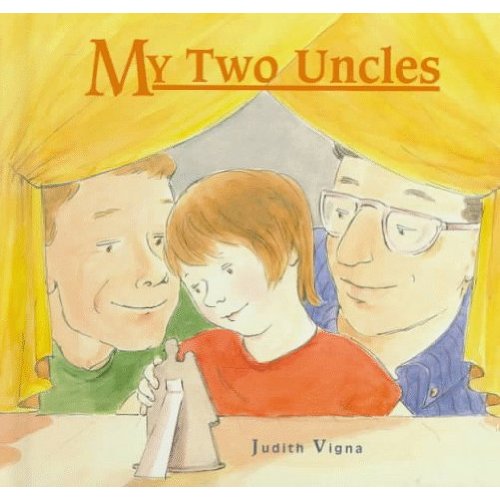
Bunting, E. (2006). One green apple. Illustrated by T. Lewin. Clarion.

Ages 4-8.

As a Muslim girl rides in a hay wagon heading to an apple orchard on a class trip, the dupatta on her head setting her apart, she observes that while some of the children seem friendly, others are not. Her father has explained, …we are not always liked here. Our home country (never named in the story) and our new one have had difficulties. Later, when she puts a green apple into the cider press instead of a ripe red one as her classmates have done, they protest. But the cider from all their apples mixed together is delicious–a metaphor for the benefits of intermingling people who are different. Lewin’s watercolors radiate sunlight and capture the gamut of emotions that Farah experiences on this challenging second day in her new school in the U.S. They show her do wncast silence and sense of isolation because she can’t speak the language, her shy smile when a classmate befriends her, and, finally, her triumphant smile as she speaks one of her first English words, App-ell. This story, along with Bernard Wolf’s Coming to America: A Muslim Family's Story (Lee & Low, 2003), can heighten youngsters’ awareness of what it must be like to feel different and alone and that each person has something unique to contribute to the good of all. (School Library Journal)

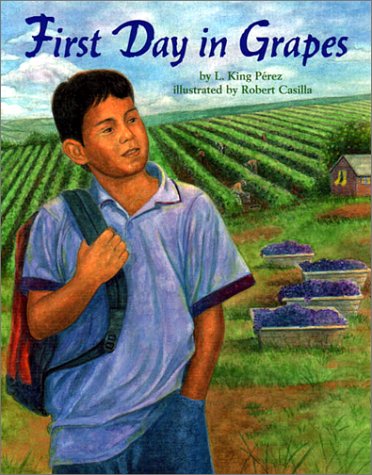
Choi, Y. (2001). The name jar. New York: Knopf. Ages 4-8.

Unhei has j ust come with her family from Korea and is starting school. Her name is pronounced Yoon-hye, which means grace, but she feels awkward about it after some teasing on the school bus. She decides to choose an American name, and her classmates oblige her by filling a glass jar with their suggestions. Her mother reminds her that she and her grandmother went to a name master for Unhei’s name, and Unhei practices stamping her name with the beautiful name stamp her grandmother gave her. Finally, Unhei decides to keep her own name, and one of her classmates even has a stamp made for himself with the Korean characters for friend. The paintings are mostly in gold and earth tones, and the figures have both stature and simplicity--as does the story.

My Two Uncles by Judith Vigna  
  
Published by Albert Whitman, 1995  
32 pages  
ISBN: 080755507X  
  
Ages 4-8

Elly loves her two uncles -- her father's brother Ned and his partner Phil. Together the three of them work on a special handmade gift for her grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary but then Elly is saddened to learn that Uncle Phil has not been invited to the anniversary party and Uncle Ned refuses to go without him. An unusually realistic account of a young child's struggle to understand the complexities of homophobia within her extended family ends not with happiness but with hope. CCBC categories: Understanding Oneself and Others  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

First Day in Grapes



by L. King Pérez  
Illustrated by Robert Casilla   
  
Published by Lee & Low, 2002  
32 pages  
ISBN: 1-58430-045-0  
  
Ages 5 - 8

Moving from one migrant camp to another as his parents follow the crops throughout California, Chico has started at new schools many times. Yet it never gets any easier being the new kid. At the start of third grade, Chico is dreading another first day once again. Even getting on the bus is scary when the driver greets him gruffly. But his new school turns out to have Ms. Andrews, a teacher who makes Chico feel welcome and who quickly recognizes and praises his math abilities. When two kids start to tease and verbally bully Chico, he understands for the first time the meaning behind his mother's simple act of having him stand tall at the start of the day. She is telling him to be proud and have courage. He is able to draw upon his math skills, not his fists, to stand up to the boys in a hopeful story that will resonate with many children. CCBC categories: Picture Books For Older Children.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Dia's Story Cloth: The Hmong People's Journey to Freedom

by Dia Cha and Chue and Nhia Thao Cha  
  
Published by Denver Museum of Natural History/Lee & Low, 1996  
24 pages  
ISBN: 1-880000-34-2  
  
Ages 8 - 11

From a refugee camp in Thailand, Dia Cha's aunt and uncle, Chue and Nhia Thao Cha, sent her the story cloth that is the inspiration and the centerpiece for this important 111/4 x 8/1/2" book about the Hmong. The cloth they stitched depicts the history of the Hmong, whose culture reaches back thousands of years to China, and stretches from Asia to North America, where over 100,000 Hmong have settled in the years since the Vietnam War (including many in Wisconsin). Hmong means "free people," Dia writes in her introduction. "This story cloth will tell you about our life." In the text, Dia simply and skillfully threads her own story into that of the Hmong people as she tells about life farming with her family as a child in Laos, and then the violent upheaval of the Vietnam War that saw the death or displacement of thousands of Hmong in Southeast Asia. Dia's Story Cloth includes a discussion of Hmong history, culture and artistic traditions by the Curator of Ethnology at the Denver Museum of Natural History. CCBC categories: The Arts; Contemporary People, Places and Events; Historical People, Places and Events. 1996, Denver Museum of Natural History/Lee & Low, 24 pages, $14.95. Ages 8-11.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# My Name Is Maria Isabelhttp://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/mariaisa.jpg

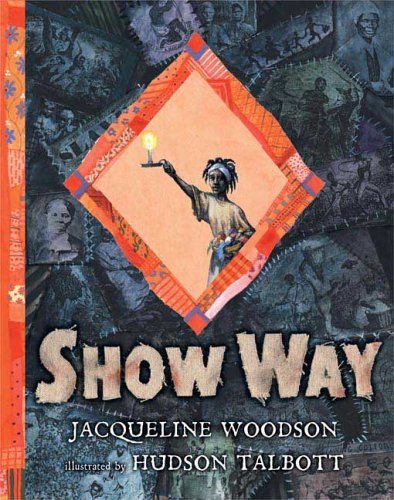
by Alma Flor Ada  
Illustrated by K. Dyble Thompson   
  
Published by Atheneum, 1993  
57 pages  
ISBN: 0-689-31517-1  
  
Ages 7-9

We already have two Mariás in this class. Why don't we call you Mary instead?" So begins the first day at a new school for nine-year old Mariá Isabel Salazar Lopez, who is proud of her real name, and the Puerto Rican family heritage it represents. Mariá Isabel can't get used to the strange new name Mary Lopez, but she is shy and doesn't know how to tell her teacher. If that weren't enough, her mother gets a job and is no longer at home when Mariá Isabel finishes school each day. Mariá Isabel's struggle to adapt to changes, and to find her voice, is at the center of this inviting story exploring important issues of identity and understanding. CCBC categories: Easy Fiction; Understanding Oneself And Others.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

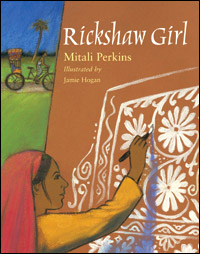
# Indian Shoeshttp://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/indianshoes.jpg by Cynthia Leitich Smith Illustrated by Jim Madsen Published by HarperCollins, 2002 66 pages ISBN: 0-06-029531-7 Ages 6 - 9

An excellent collection of interrelated short stories will appeal to newly independent young readers ready to tackle one or more of these acessible stories. Young Ray Halfmoon lives with his grandpa in Chicago. In each chapter author Cynthia Leitich Smith places Ray and Grandpa into a believable adventure with a manageable challenge: summer fishing, baseball team, lonely holiday situation, contest, etc. Because her main characters have a Seminole-Cherokee heritage, the author has woven important Native cultural details into her narrative. Her adroit uses of colloquial language also earmark this fine collection of brief contemporary fiction. Smith herself lives in Texas, and is a mixed blood, enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. CCBC Categories: Books for Beginning Readers and Newly Independent Readers.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# Show Way

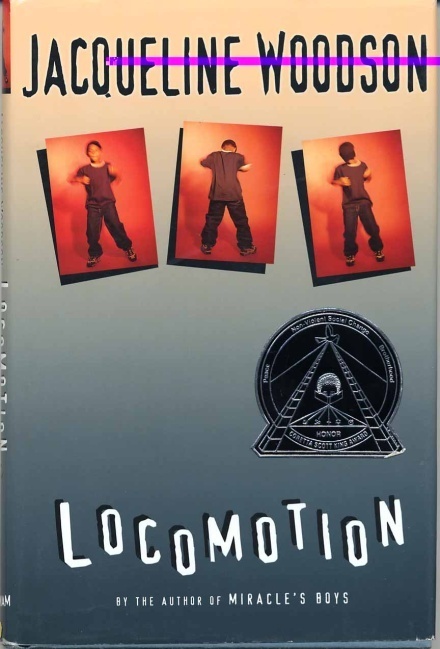
by Jacqueline Woodson  
Illustrated by Hudson Talbott   
  
Published by Putnam, 2005  
40 pages  
ISBN: 0-399-23749-6  
  
Ages 5-9

As author Jacqueline Woodson traces her family history from the times of slavery to today, she celebrates the resilience of each successive generation as embodied by a woman or girl who courageously strived for more—for herself, her family, and her people. Each woman or girl is known by her spirit and accomplishments if not always by her name. Connecting each generation in Wooodson’s stirring, beautifully written narrative are the sewing skills that were passed down from mother to daughter, along with their stories and the quilt that had mapped the way to freedom: patches and stitches forming the pattern that showed the way. Woodson’s moving tribute to past, present, and future is sewn from the stitches *she* creates with words, carrying on the tradition in her own way. This moving and uplifting picture book features stunning illustrations by Hudson Talbott that integrate quilt motifs with other images from African American history. (MS) ©2005 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

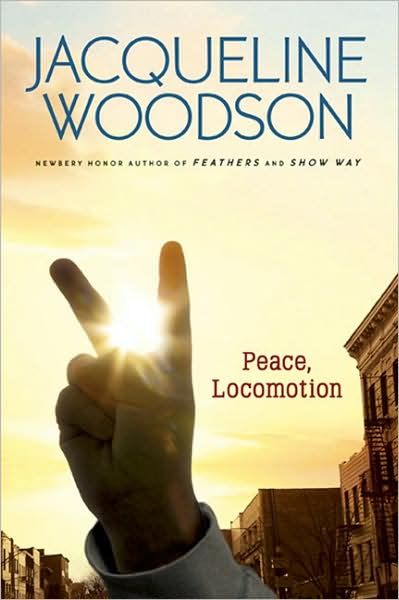
Rickshaw Girl

by Mitali Perkins  
Illustrated by Jamie Hogan   
  
Published by Charlesbridge, 2007  
91 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-58089-308-4  
  
Ages 8-10

Ten-year-old Naima lives in Bangladesh, where her father earns a meager living as a rickshaw driver, despite the many hours he works. With the best of intentions, Naima tries pedaling her father’s new rickshaw, determined to prove she can handle the job and help out. Instead, she accidentally crashes the vehicle. Burdened with guilt despite her family’s reassurances, Naima decides to turn to something she knows she can do—painting and design—-to help pay for the rickshaw repairs. Since it goes against her cultural traditions for a woman or girl to work for money, she takes the plan she had for pedaling the rickshaw--posing as a boy—-and puts it to a different use. Determined to convince the owner of the new rickshaw repair shop in the neighboring village to hire her to decorate rickshaws, Naima discovers—-to her astonishment-—that the owner is a woman. She opened her business with the support of a loan from the Woman’s Bank, and she offers Naima the opportunity to work—-as a girl-—and develop her talents. Mitali Perkins introduces Bangla culture and customs in the context of an appealing, child-centered story that also highlights changing attitudes and times. An author’s note provides additional information on microfinance—the system that has enabled small businesses throughout Bangladesh to start up and thrive, including many run by women. (MS) ©2007 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson  
  
Published by Putnam, 2003  
128 pages  
ISBN: 0-399-23115-3  
  
Ages 9 - 12

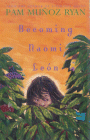
Eleven-year-old Lonnie C. Motion-Locomotion for short-is writing to save his life. At least that's what it feels like. Living in foster care since the death of his parents in a fire, Lonnie is directing his grief and his hurt into poetry, with the help of his teacher. Along the way, he's discovering he has both a talent and a need for writing. Separated from his younger sister, Lili, who has been placed in another home, and uncertain about what Miss Edna, his foster mother, thinks of him, poetry gives Lonnie focus for his undirected energy and form for his mixed-up emotions. It's also a way to record what he observes and experiences in daily life, as well as the bittersweet memories of life before the fire. Jacqueline Woodson uses both free verse and structured poetic forms as she creates a memorable character study of an African American boy breaking out of the past and into a future of his own making. Nothing is static-not Lonnie himself, not his relationships, and certainly not his life. Honor Book, CCBC Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion CCBC categories: Fiction for Children.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Peace, Locomotion

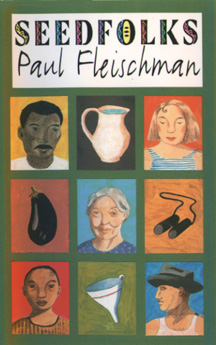
by Jacqueline  Woodson  
  
Published by Putnam, 2009  
134 pages  
ISBN: 978-0-399-24655-5  
  
Ages 10 - 13

In *Locomotion* (Putnam, 2003), Jacqueline Woodson introduced Lonnie C. Motion, aka Locomotion, a talented African American boy whose poetry helped him express his hurt and his grief since the death of his parents in a fire. Now, Locomotion wants to document his life for his younger sister, Lili, who is living in a different foster home. In letters to Lili, Locomotion reveals that his new teacher doesn’t appreciate his poetry, while his wonderful foster mother, Miss Edna, and her son, Rodney, are steadfast in every way. But when Miss Edna’s oldest son, Jenkins, returns from the war without a leg, the sense of grief and loss echoes Locomotion’s own pain every time he thinks about his parents. For Locomotion, the challenge is to hold on to the memories of what he once had but let go of the guilt at moving on. One of the hardest things to accept is that he would never have met Miss Edna or Rodney or Jenkins or his best friend, Clyde, were it not for his parents’ deaths. Accepting that truth, and embracing a new idea of family, doesn’t come easily, but it comes. Deeply observant, Locomotion looks at Jenkins and the war and everything around him and thinks about peace--in the world, and in his own life and heart: “Peace is your sister running to you at Prospect / Park, / Throwing her arms around you and saying / I’ve missed you a million, Lonnie. / Peace is the good stuff / That happens to all of us / Sometimes.” CCBC categories: Fiction for Children.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Ryan P. M. (2005). Becoming Naomi Leon. Scholastic.

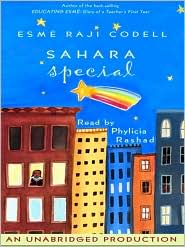
Ages 9-12

Half-Mexican Naomi Soledad, 11, and her younger disabled brother, Owen, have been brought up by their tough, loving great-grandmother in a California trailer park, and they feel at home in the multiracial community. Then their alcoholic mom reappears after seven years with her slimy boyfriend, hoping to take Naomi (not Owen) back and collect the welfare check. Determined not to let that happen, Gram drives the trailer across the border to a barrio in Oaxaca to search for the children’s dad at the city’s annual Christmas arts festival. In true mythic tradition, Ryan, the author of the award-winning Esperanza Rising (2000), makes Naomi’s search for her dad a search for identity, and both are exciting. Mom is demonized, but the other characters are more complex, and the quest is heartbreaking. The dense factual detail about the festival sometimes slows the story, but it’s an effective tool for dramatizing Naomi’s discovery of her Mexican roots and the artist inside herself.

Seedfolks

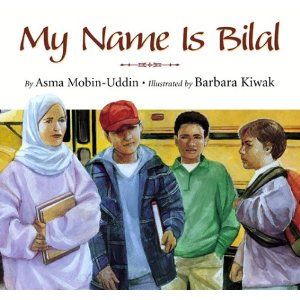
by Paul Fleischman  
  
Published by Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins, 1997  
69 pages  
ISBN: 0-06-027471-9  
  
Ages 9 - 13

A young Vietnamese girl plants six lima bean seedlings in an overgrown, garbage-strewn, inner-city lot in Cleveland. An elderly longtime resident of the neighborhood watches the child from a third-story apartment window, unsure of what the girl is doing all alone in that abandoned lot, but suspicious. Life in the neighborhood has taught the woman to be distrustful of people, even of children. But when the woman discovers the girl has planted beans, she is startled and moved by the tender act, and when she realizes it is far too early in the spring for such young plantings to survive, she calls upon a friend to help her secretly tend them so the child's small garden will grow. From these small acts, a neighborhood begins to change. Where once there was an old, abandoned lot, a garden emerges. Where once there were disconnected lives, a fragile sense of community begins to grow. Seedfolks takes place in economically disadvantaged urban neighborhood comprised of individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, a neighborhood in which some of the residents are relative newcomers to the United States while others have lived on those very city blocks for most or all of their lives. Author Paul Fleischman gives them voice, writing each chapter from the point of view of a different individual in the neighborhood who gets involved in the garden. There are conflicts as well as connections that result from the garden's growth in Seedfolks, but ultimately there is hope, and a flowering of the human spirit. Winner, CCBC Newbery Award Discussion CCBC categories: Fiction for Children; Fiction for Teenagers.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

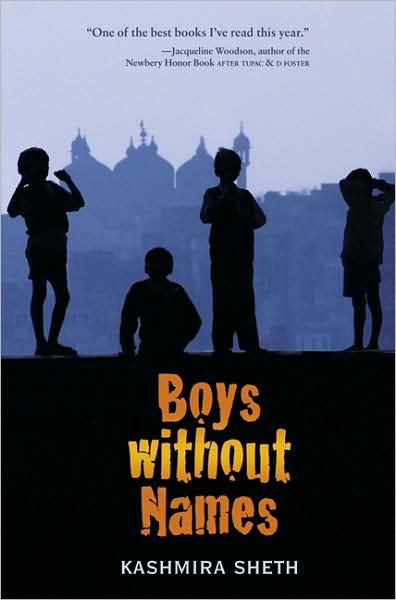
[](http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/imageviewer.asp?ean=9780807217221&imId=37906036)Sahara Special by Esme Raji Codell

Fifth grader Sahara Jones was placed in special education when her teacher discovered the letters she had written to her father hidden in her desk at school. Sahara's mom pulls her out of special education when she hears about the antics of Darrell Sikes, the other "special needs" child. Sahara returns to the regular classroom but doesn't see the point in working hard when her work will just end up in the counselor's office and be used against her. When Sahara shows up for her second year of fifth grade, there is a new teacher. Her name is Madame Poitier, but the kids call her Miss Pointy. Miss Pointy is like no teacher Sahara has ever known. "She looked less like a teacher and more like one of those burnt-out punk-rocker teenagers who hang out in front of the Dunkin' Donuts." The subjects they study include puzzling, time travel and mad science. When she passes out writing journals to the class, Sahara begins to have fresh hope for the school year. Through Miss Pointy's unusual teaching, storytelling, and quiet support, Sahara finds the courage to overcome her fears and begin to care about school again. 175 pages, 4th grade and up.

Mobin-Uddin, A. (2005). My name is Bilal. Boyds Mills Press. Ages 9-12.

[](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/images/1590781759/ref=dp_image_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books)

A well-done treatment of a subject not often seen in children’s picture books. Bilal transfers to a school where he and his sister are the only Muslim children. After an incident in which a boy pulls off Ayesha’s headscarf, Bilal decides to hide the fact that he is Muslim until an understanding teacher, who is also Muslim, gives him a biography of Bilal ibn Rabah, a black slave who became the very first muezzin because of his steadfastness in the face of religious persecution. Attractive watercolor illustrations emphasize the parallels between the persecution faced by Bilal ibn Rabah and that faced by the American boy. This is an important book for most libraries as it will enhance discussions of cultural diversity and understanding. (School Library Journal)

Boys without Names

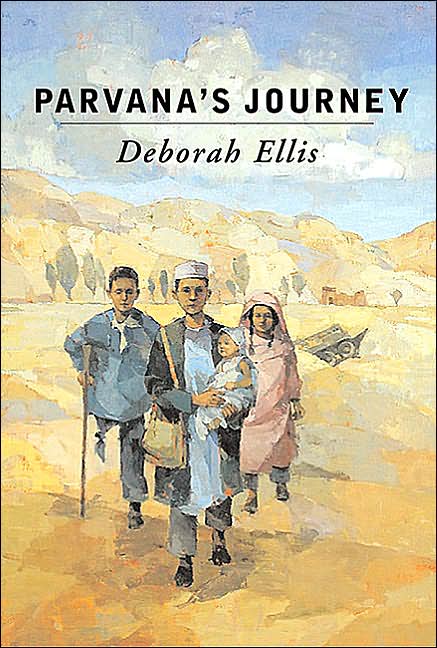
by Kashmira Sheth  
  
Published by Balzer & Bray, 2010  
320 pages  
ISBN: 978-0061857607   
  
Ages 9-13

Eleven-year-old Gopal lives with his family in rural India. After a bumper onion crop drives down the prices and leaves the family with little money and mounting debts, they flee to Mumbai in search of a better life. Gopal's father gets separated from the family, and Gopal himself is kidnapped and sold into child slavery. He's locked in a stifling attic room with several other boys where they are forced to glue tiny beads into intricate patterns on wooden picture frames that will ultimately be exported and sold abroad. A cruel master Gopal nicknames Scar keeps the boys overworked and underfed, and discourages them from forming any bonds, or even telling each other their names. Even so, Gopal slowly manages to gain the boys' confidence by telling them stories at night before they fall to sleep, and gradually each boy begins to reveal his own story. Throughout the ordeal, Gopal looks for an opportunity to escape but as his bonds to the other boys become stronger, the idea of leaving them behind becomes impossible. With perfectly paced, distinctive writing, Kashimira Sheth provides a fascinating look into contemporary child slavery, endemic throughout the world. By setting the story in a specific place, she succeeds in personalizing it and in enriching the story with cultural detail. Readers are transported to a different place, and will get an insider's view of Gopal's life. (KTH) ©2010 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

**The Breadwinner**

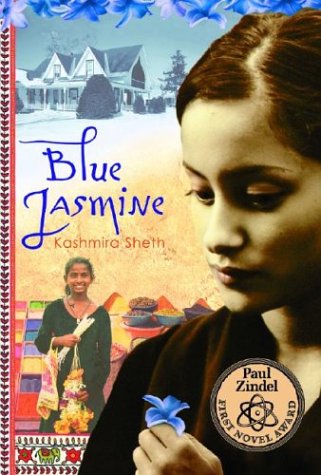
by Deborah Ellis  
  
Published by Groundwood, 2000  
170 pages  
ISBN: 0888994192  
price: $15.95  
  
Ages 10 - 14

In the first book of what is now called "The Breadwinner" trilogy (which includes "Parvana's Journey" and "Mud City," Deborah Ellis introduces readers to Parvana, a girl living in Kabul, Afghanistan, under the rule of the Taliban. After her father is arrested, 11-year-old Parvana begins posing as a boy to earn money to help support her family. Once well-off, they are now struggling to survive, living in one room. Her mother and older sister are not allowed to work--part of the oppressive rules the Taliban have imposed on women and girls. Parvana's ability to pass as a boy gives her a freedom her mother and older sister cannot enjoy, but it also places enormous responsibility and pressure on her. Ellis's narrative is particularly strong in depicting the underground effort of women and girls to resist the oppressive regime.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

**Parvana's Journey**

by Deborah Ellis  
  
Published by A Groundwood Book / Douglas & McIntyre, 2002  
199 pages  
ISBN: 0-88899-514-8  
  
Ages 10 - 14

All my girls are smart," Parvana's father used to tell her. "You will grow into strong, brave women and you will rebuild our poor Afghanistan." Now 13, Parvana has just buried her father. Separated from her mother and siblings in war-ravaged Afghanistan, where the Taliban still rules, she travels by foot across the country, holding out hope that she will find them again. When Parvana finds a baby in an abandoned, burned out village, she cannot leave him behind. She trades the burden of her father's beloved books for the weight of the boy she names Hassan. Soon, Asif, a prickly, wounded boy who has lost a leg, has joined them, and then they meet Leila, a spirited, nine-year-old girl who wears her wounds in the way she moves through the world, touched by the belief she cannot be killed by land mines. This foursome takes refuge in the valley where Leila has been living with her aging grandmother. The Green Valley, Parvana calls it, using the name she had given to the place of ideal refuge she had created in her daydreams. But the Green Valley isn't a dream, it's part of the real world, where the war eventually finds them once again. Deborah Ellis's sequel to her 2001 novel The Breadwinner (Groundwood) is an important and moving book that humanizes the headlines, distilling for young readers a conflict and recent history that can sometimes seem incomprehensible to a story about children they can know and understand, children like them. While the accomplishments of Parvana and her companions may seem occasionally unrealistic (could a starving 13-year-old girl really carry a heavy baby for so long and so far?), their situation is compelling and their interactions feel authentic (the relationship between Parvana and Asif is especially satisfying). And despite the tragedy of their situation, Ellis manages to tell their story without overwhelming young readers. CCBC categories: Fiction For Children.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Blue Jasmine by Kashmira Sheth  
  
Published by Hyperion, 2004  
186 pages  
ISBN: 0-7868-1855-7  
  
Ages 11 - 14

There are a lot of adjustments for 12-year-old Seema when she moves with her family from India to Iowa City. Her family must adjust to a new language, a new culture, new ways of doing everyday things like grocery shopping, and, most especially, the cold weather. The most difficult thing for Seema, however, is living half-way around the world from extended family she left back in India, particularly her cousin Raju who resents that she left him. But her new life in an American public school soon begins to crowd the corners of her mind, both academically and socially, as she begins to feel she is fitting in. Socially adept in both cultures, she is even able to deal with the classroom bully with aplomb. First-time novelist Kashmira Sheth shows remarkable talent for creating credible, well-rounded characters who are able to meet the challenge of living in two cultures without being forced to choose between them. This, coupled with her skillful use of metaphor, raise this novel high above the typical immigrant story for this age level. (KTH) ©2004 Cooperative Children's Book Center

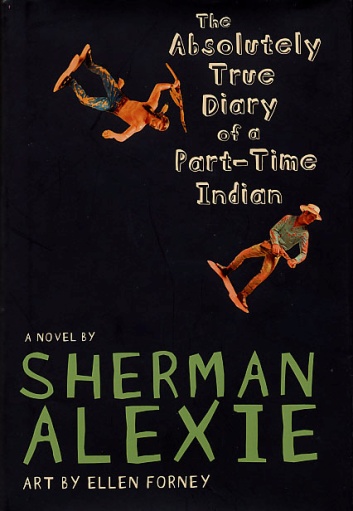
The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child



by Francisco Jimenez  
  
Published by Houghton Mifflin, 1999  
116 pages  
ISBN: 0-395-97902-1  
  
Age 12 and older

Jiménez's memoir of his childhood and adolescence is presented as a collection of 12 hauntingly spare short stories that can either stand alone or be read as a continuous narrative. A poignant, childlike voice is consistently maintained throughout, even as he writes of the subhuman living conditions and constant fear that were realities for his migrant family. This collection, which won the Américas Award, Boston Globe-Horn Book Fiction Award, and a Jane Addams Honor, was first published as a paperback original by University of New Mexico Press in 1997. CCBC categories: New Editions of Old Favorites.  © Cooperative Children's Book Cente

# The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian



by Sherman Alexie  
Illustrated by Ellen Fourney   
  
Published by Litte, Brown, 2007  
240 pages  
ISBN: 0316013684   
  
Ages 13-16

Arnold Spirit, known as Junior on the Spokane Indian reservation where he has always lived, has always been teased and picked on by his peers because of his multiple physical disabilities. Only his family and his best friend, a tough kid named Rowdy, understand that beneath Junior’s odd exterior there is a brilliant, artistic, athletic, and extraordinarily witty kid. When Junior decides to start ninth grade at the nearest white high school, 22 miles off the reservation, he is thought of as a traitor by those he left behind on the reservation, and as a weird Indian kid by the kids in his new school. But Junior is smart and resilient, and manages to prove himself to the students and staff at his new school through his academic prowess and basketball skills. The reservation kids, however, are not so quick to accept Junior’s new life, especially Rowdy who feels rejected and betrayed. Sherman Alexie’s first novel for young adults is hilarious and touching at the same time. With occasional cartoons, frequent self-deprecating humor, and unwavering depth, Junior struggles with his cultural identity as an Indian teenager who wants a different kind of life from his that of his parents and friends. (KTH) ©2007 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

If You Come Softly



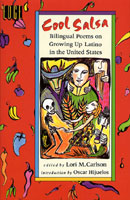
by Jacqueline Woodson  
  
Published by Putnam, 1998  
181 pages  
ISBN: 0399231129  
  
Age 13 and older

A quiet, beautifully etched portrait of a first love that is shattered by the racism, If You Come Softly traces the relationship of two teens whose lives intertwine for a short but life-changing time. Ellie is Jewish and white. Jeremiah is black. Both are from well-to-do families where it's sometimes hard to be yourself, and both are new students at Percy Academy. It was Jeremiah's father, a well-known African American filmmaker, who wanted Jeremiah to attend a private school. Jeremiah doesn't let anyone know who is father is, though, or his mother, an accomplished novelist. It's too hard being yourself--being accepted for yourself, if your parents fame precedes you. For Ellie, Percy was her own choice--made because she liked the sound of the name. "I knew it was a stupid reason to choose a school, but they all seemed exactly alike." Ellie lives with her parents in a large apartment that still echoes with the emptiness of her mother's leaving. It happened twice, and twice her mother returned, but the feeling of abandonment still haunts Ellie, even when she sits in the very same room as her mother harboring the secrets of her heart. One of those secrets is Jeremiah. They meet on the first day of school, and each makes the other feel right. But Ellie isn't sure how her parents would react to Jeremiah, and her heart can't risk finding out. For his part, Jeremiah takes Ellie home to meet his mother, who sees and understands her sons feelings. In his neighborhood, too, he has support, from a best friend whose mother is white and father is black. But he is hesitant to tell his father. "Thing about white people," his father tells him, "they don't know they're white. They know what everybody else is, but they don't know they're white." Jeremiah stays silent. Ultimately, however, it is not secrets and silence that separate Jeremiah and Ellie, it is the racism of our society, racism that makes a black teenage boy running with a basketball in a white neighborhood too quickly assumed as suspect, too quickly mistaken for a "tall, dark man" being pursued by the police. CCBC categories: Fiction for Teenagers  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

American Born Chinese

by Gene Luen Yang  
  
Published by First Second, 2006  
233 pages  
ISBN: 1596431520  
  
Age 13 and older

The Monkey King is tired of his second-class status. Adored by his own subjects, he is snubbed by human deities until he perfects his powers and literally beats them into submission. “I am not a monkey” he proclaims. “I am the Great Sage, Equal of Heaven!” Jin Wang is the only Chinese American student at his school. When Wei-Chen Sun arrives from Taiwan, Jin Wang thinks, “Something made me want to beat him up.” Still, it’s not long before the two boys become best friends. Blond-haired Danny’s life would be perfect were it not for his cousin, Chin-Kee, who embodies every offensive stereotype of the Chinese, from buck teeth and braided ponytail to mispronunciations (“Harro Amellica!”). Gene Luen Yang’s brilliant graphic novel moves back and forth between these three separate narrative strands, each one exploring issues of identity, belonging, humility, and friendship as the storylines develop. Yang’s narrative builds to an unforgettable and dazzling series of revelations as the three storylines surprisingly converge in a book that is eye-opening and provocative, pushing the boundaries of comfort for readers as it exposes racism from its most subtle to most overt. (MS) ©2006 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States

by Lori, editor Carlson  
  
Published by An Edge Book/Henry Holt, 1994  
123 pages  
ISBN: 0-8050-3135-9  
  
Ages 12 and older

Life / to understand me / you have to know Spanish / feel it in the blood of your soul. / If I speak another language / and use different words / for feelings that will always stay the same / I don't know / if I'll continue being / the same person." ("Learning English" by Luis Alberto Ambroggio.) In sections titled "School Days," "Home and Homeland," "Memories," "Hard Times," "Time to Party" and "A Promising Future," poems of 29 Latin American writers are presented in both English and Spanish. A collection rich with language and memories, events and emotions grounded in Latino experience. CCBC categories: Poetry.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/anislandlikeyou.jpgAn Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio

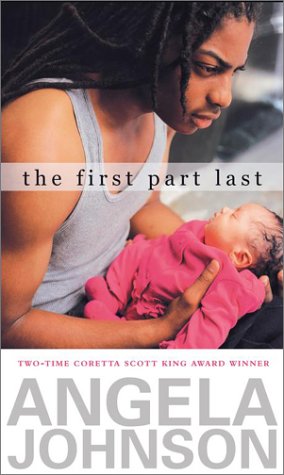
by Judith Ortiz Cofer  
  
Published by Melanie Kroupa/Orchard, 1995  
165 pages  
ISBN: 0-531-06897-8  
  
Ages 12 - 16

The sounds and the sights of El Barrio and the relationships and the emotions of Puerto-Rican-American family and neighborhood life form the backdrop for the each of the twelve stories that comprise An Island Like You. For the teenagers whose hearts and minds are unmasked in this powerful collection of short stories from Latina author Judith Ortiz Cofer, El Barrio is their home and their culture, steeped in the Puerto Rican traditions of their parents and grandparents, flavored with the promise and bitterness of urban American life. El Barrio is also the world they share. Yet each of the protagonists in An Island Like You moves through this world in his or her own way. The range of experience which Cofer brilliantly illuminates through the singular lives of her adolescent characters reveals truths that are sometimes comforting, sometimes startling, but always dancing on the edge of enlightenment. CCBC categories: FICTION FOR TEENAGERS.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/skinimin.jpgThe Skin I'm In

by Sharon G.  Flake  
  
Published by Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 1998  
171 pages  
ISBN: 0-7868-2392-5  
  
Ages 12-16

Maleeka Madison is always getting teased about the way she looks. "If it ain't about my color, it's my clothes." Maleeka can do something about the handsewn clothes she finds embarrassing. As long as she stays on classmate Charlese's good side, Char loans her fashionable outfits that Maleeka changes into each morning at school. But there's not much she can do about the color of her skin. No one has a problem with Maleeka being Black; after all, most of her classmates are Black, too. But plenty of them have a problem with Maleeka being too black. "They don't say nothing about the fact that I'm a math whiz, and can outdo ninth graders when it comes to figuring numbers. Or that I got a good memory and never forget a single, solitary thing I read. They only see what they see, and they don't seem to like what they see much." Maleeka knows she deserves to be treated better, but there is a huge gap between knowing she deserves more respect and liking herself enough to demand it. A new teacher at her school, Miss Saunders, tries to help Maleeka see how beautiful she is both inside and out, but Maleeka is resistant to her efforts. In her opinion, Miss Saunders is butting into things that aren't her business, in spite of, or perhaps because of, the disfiguring birthmark on the teacher's own face. A stunning and courageous debut novel from Sharon G. Flake moves swiftly with dialogue finely tuned to the voices of contemporary African American teens as it explores issues of self-respect and self-esteem through the life of a creative and talented young woman who is learning to see herself in new ways. CCBC categories: Fiction for Teenagers  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

The First Part Last

by Angela Johnson  
  
Published by Simon & Schuster, 2003  
144 pages  
ISBN: 0-399-23990-1  
  
Ages 13 - 18

Sixteen-year-old Bobby is overwhelmed by love for his infant daughter, Feather. He's also overwhelmed by the responsibility of caring for her. Bobby's daily life unfolds in a series of middle-of-the-night feedings and early morning struggles to get out of the house and to school on time. His exhaustion is palpable. His divorced, middle-class parents watch from the sidelines. His mother, with whom he lives, insists that Bobby take full responsibility for Feather, and she steels herself from stepping in every time she sees him falter. Bobby adores his child, but he also misses being a teenager without any worries, although the price for slipping into carefree ways is a high one. In chapters that move back and forth from the present to the past, Bobby, who is African American, reveals the jumbled pattern of his life and also recalls his loving relationship with Feather's mother, Nia. The chapters in the past move slowly but surely forward-through the revelation that Nia is pregnant and the resulting shock to the final chapters that reveal why Bobby is now the sole parent of his child. Johnson's powerful prose is so firmly grounded in Bobby's perspective that it's as if his soft, pained voice is speaking his story aloud. The title refers not only to the structure of the narrative, but also to the fact that this is a prequel of sorts to Johnson's novel Heaven (Simon & Schuster, 1998), in which a slightly older Bobby and Feather are secondary characters. Winner, CCBC Coretta Scott King Author Award Discussion CCBC categories: Fiction for Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Speak



by Laurie Halse Anderson  
  
Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999  
197 pages  
ISBN: 0374371520  
  
Age 14 and older

Melinda Sordino begins her freshman year in high school as a social outcast. The world has quickly spread that she had called the cops to break up a summer party. The truth is that Melinda had called 911 for another reason: she had just been raped by a popular senior. Now Melinda is finding it harder and harder to speak about anything at all, and she becomes increasingly withdrawn from her family and her school. Laurie Halse Andersen spins out Melinda's painful story in acerbic, often witty, first-person sound bites, in which we see the realities of high school social life through Melinda's eyes. Luckily, she is able to find a means of expression through an art project, with the help of a rather eccentric art teacher who is able to win Melinda's trust.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/bornconfused.jpgBorn Confused

by Tanuja Desai Hidier  
  
Published by Scholastic Press, 2002  
413 pages  
ISBN: 0-439-35762-4  
  
Ages 15 and older

Seventeen-year-old Dimple Lala is a first generation Indian American living in New Jersey. The end of Dimple's junior year of high school marks the start of a summer of self-discovery for this young woman who loves taking photographs but doesn't think of herself as a photographer. She fails to claim her passion just as she fails to embrace her Indian heritage as a positive part of her identity. Dimple's parent seem determined to hook her up with a suitable boy, and they believe they've found one in Karsh, the son of an old friend from medical school in India. At first, as Dimple tells her best friend, Gwyn, she is seriously uninterested in Karsh. But just as she's taking a second look, tall, thin, blonde-haired, picture-perfect Gwyn, who's just been dumped, looks too, complicating Dimple's feelings for both her best friend and this young man who has begun to intrigue her. Dimple is also becoming immersed for the first time in a vibrant South Asian club culture in New York City, thanks in part to her cousin Kavita, recently arrived from India and a student at NYU. Kavita also invites Dimple to attend a student conference on South Asian identity. That Gwyn participates even more eagerly than Dimple, throwing herself into "becoming more Indian" because of her interest in Karsh, and her need to find something to fill the void of an emotionally barren family, is just one of the many funny, embarrassing, authentic, and genuine moments that abound in this sparkling, complex, appealing first novel from Tanuja Desai Hidier. Some of Dimple's revelations over the summer initially shock her, such as her cousin coming out as a lesbian, and her own realization that the beautiful young woman she's seen dancing in the clubs is actually a young man in drag, but she is able to absorb these experiences into her understanding of these individuals without judgment. (Less easy for Dimple to face is the aftermath when she gets drunk for the first time, and her first experience getting high. Yet it seems unlikely that Dimple will seek out either activity in the future, even though neither are wholly condemned by her or her peers.) It's hard for Dimple to navigate her changing relationship with Gwyn, especially after discovering that her best friend, whom she thought she knew so well, has been holding back a lot from her. But perhaps the greatest revelation she has by summer's end -- beyond her own newfound ability to embrace who she is and what she cares about -- is that her parents are so much more complex and extraordinary than she ever imagined. Their greatest wish is not for Dimple to find a husband, but rather a soul-mate, whoever that might be. CCBC categories: Fiction For Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/lalinea.jpgLa Línea

by Ann Jaramillo  
  
Published by Deborah Brodie Book / Roaring Brook Press, 2006  
131 pages  
ISBN: 1596431547  
  
Age 13 and older

Fifteen-year-old Miguel and his thirteen-year-old sister, Elena, have been waiting to join their parents in California for years when they finally set off from their small, impoverished Mexican village. Neither teen knows what a harrowing journey they are about to undertake. Because they will be crossing the U.S. border illegally, the obstacles they face on both sides are huge and often deadly. In their own country, there is the threat of soldiers as well as bandits, who attack the trains on which the would-be immigrants desperately cling, riding atop the cars. And then there is the desert crossing. In those desperate heat-dazed days, a fellow immigrant who had become Miguel and Elena’s protector dies of thirst and sickness, while their guide is shot by self-appointed militia members patrolling the U.S. side of the border. Miguel and Elena made the journey to change their lives, and it changes them in ways they could not have imagined. Ann Jaramillo is a middle school teacher in a Texas border community. She wrote La Línea for her students, many of whom have made journeys that parallel Miguel and Elena’s. Her timely novel reminds readers that human hearts and hopes and dreams cannot be defined or restrained by laws or politics.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/monster.bmpMonster

by Walter Dean Myers  
Illustrated by Christopher Myers   
  
Published by HarperCollins, 1999  
1999 pages  
ISBN: 281  
  
Ages 13 and older

Walter Dean Myers's striking story of an African American teenage boy on trial for murder is a powerful exploration of innocence as both a state of mind and a matter of perception, as well as a label attached to actions both explicit and implied. Sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon is accused of being an accomplice in a drugstore robbery in which the storekeeper was murdered. While awaiting and then enduring the trial, the teenager is being held in jail with adults. Myers weaves together journal entries that Steve writes in jail with a filmmaker's script chronicling the courtroom events. A talented filmmaking student at his high school, Steve, who feels as if he has walked into the middle of a movie, filters his trial through his filmmaker's eye to put some distance between himself and the out-of-control turn that his life has taken. Only in the journal does he close the distance, and his entries reveal his intense fear. What his journal entries do not reveal is whether or not Steve was actually involved in the robbery, and the action in the courtroom is no more revealing. Was Steve an innocent bystander fingered by others involved to lessen their own sentences, or was he a kid who thought, before his world came crashing down, that it was possible to maintain a mantle of innocence by playing just a small role in a crime that was never supposed to end in murder--acting as an advance lookout rather than actually robbing the store? This riveting, highly discussable novel provides an intense and eye-opening look at both human nature and the criminal justice system, and both are called into question. The prosecutor labels Steve a "monster," and it is an idea--a question about himself--that Steve cannot shake. Nor can readers, not because Steve is a monster but rather because he so clearly is not. CCBC categories: Fiction for Teenagers.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Stitches

by Glen Huser  
  
Published by Groundwood / Douglas & McIntyre, 2003  
198 pages  
ISBN: 0-88899-553-9  
  
Ages 12 - 15

Travis is a kid who has been teased since he was in first grade. First, it was words like "girlie." As he grew older, it was "Sissy. Crybaby. Fruitfly. Fagface." As he enters junior high school, his interests in sewing, puppetry and theater are encouraged, first by an English and then a home economics teacher, but these same interests are part of what mark him in the eyes of some students as a target for their continued bullying. Travis is sustained by: his best friend, Chantelle, who helps him navigate the treacheries of school. Like Travis, Chantelle stands out as different. Most people don't see beyond her disfigured body, crippled since birth. But Chantelle is bright and lively: a kindred spirit to Travis. Travis also is supported at home. His mother is on the road a lot, so it his aunt Kitaleen and her children who fill his life with love on a daily basis. Overweight Kitaleen is married to a bully herself and has to sustain her own share of verbal abuse. But her ability to embrace those around her and fill their lives with sustenance abounds, and her dignity is undeniable. Glen Huser's extraordinary book about a boy who is targeted from early childhood on because he doesn't fit the stereotype of what a "boy" should be is an unprecedented work. His funny, touching story is hard to put down, even as it treads down difficult pathways. As Travis moves through junior high school, what began as mostly verbal bullying leads to acts of severe humiliation, and, eventually, brutality. This thought-provoking, important novel that features one great character after another never overtly addresses Travis's sexuality, because Travis himself is barely beginning consider that aspect of his identity. Instead, it focuses on the many facets of Travis's personality that make him the individual he is in a book that doesn't shy away from the harsh reality of bullying and violence, but nonetheless remains an uplifting story full of warmth, humor, and hope. (MS; Nov 24) ©2003 Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/cuba15.jpgCuba 15

by Nancy Osa  
  
Published by Delacorte Press, 2003  
277 pages  
ISBN: 0-385-73021-7  
  
Ages 12 - 15

Chicago teenager Violet Paz is interested in hanging out with her friends and following the Cubs. Her father is Cuban, her mother is Polish-American, and while Violet can play a mean game of dominoes, her blond hair and green eyes link her visibly to the Euro-American side of the family. When her Miami grandparents arrive for a visit shortly after her 15th birthday, her abuela is brimming with plans for Violet's quinceañero, a traditional Latin American celebration marking a girl's coming of age. At first horrified at the thought of wearing a pink dress and tiara, over the months leading up to her party Violet learns more about the meaning behind the celebration. With the help of her friends and family, she constructs an event that reflects her unique identity while honoring the customary ritual. While the quinceañero officially marks Violet's maturation, her personal growth during her 15th year is highlighted by her emerging interest in her Cuban heritage, a quest challenged by her father's reluctance to discuss anything to do with his birthplace. As Violet looks for answers, her father and grandparents' vehement opposition to Castro's Cuba is tempered by her Aunt Luz's desire to see an end to the Cuban embargo. Ultimately, Violet must develop her own opinions. In a fresh and humorous voice, Violet winds her way through a pivotal adolescent year, full of realistic growth and change, including her rookie season on the school's speech team and a budding romance. Violet's vivid and warm family shine as solid characters in their own right throughout this stand-out debut novel by a first-time author. CCBC Categories: Fiction for Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/boymeetsboy.jpgBoy Meets Boy

by David Levithan  
  
Published by Alfred A. Knopf, 2003  
185 pages  
ISBN: 0-375-82400-6  
  
Ages 12 - 15

Imagine a world where a kindergartner's report card reads, "Paul is definitely gay" as nonchalantly as it continues, "and has a good sense of self." This is Paul's world, where boys who like boys flirt with girls who like girls, where the quarterback of the football team is also the homecoming queen, where boys have ex-boyfriends who have new girlfriends... And those are just incidental details that create the setting for a sweet high school love story that readers of all orientations will appreciate. The characters are loveable and quirky and the love story as innocent and true as any. Paul used to love Kyle, now he loves Noah who thought Paul kissed Tony. Joni used to date Ted but now she dates Chuck who drives Paul crazy. Tony is gay but his parents freaked out so Paul needs a decoy to be able to hang out with him. Tony's story serves as a counterpoint to the rest of the narrative and is, perhaps, the one that will be most familiar to readers, as it reflects the difficulties teens have navigating their sexuality in a world that is not so appreciative of difference. It serves as the grounding point for a novel in which author David Levithan constructs a remarkable and hopeful fantasy: a world where gay teens and straight teens are all just teens. By the third chapter of this remarkable novel, that world feels like something that seems quite possible. CCBC categories: Fiction for Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/martynpig.jpgMartyn Pig

by Kevin Brooks  
  
Published by U.S. edition: The Chicken House/Scholastic, 2002  
230 pages  
ISBN: 0-439-29595-5  
  
Ages 14 and older

The only person worse than Martyn's abusive alcoholic dad is his Aunt Jean. (Think of the worst person you know, then double it, and you'll be halfway to Aunt Jean.) But living with Aunt Jean seems inevitable when Martyn accidentally kills his father with a self-defensive shove, causing the drunken man to fall and hit his head on the fireplace. Years of reading Sherlock Holmes and watching Inspector Morse on television inspire a fearful Martyn to hide his father's death. He disposes of the body with the help of his neighbor and secret love-interest, Alex, who is full of ideas for how to handle the details. It's a tricky situation that's about to get worse when Martyn discovers his father was about to receive an inheritance. Just as the suspense becomes almost unbearable, another unexpected plot twist strikes without warning. Despite its macabre content, Martyn's compelling tale contains moments of inspired comedy, as when he and Alex must convince Aunt Jean that his father's dead body is actually just a sleeping one. Moral questions that plague Martyn are seamlessly integrated with the entertaining and engrossing mystery. CCBC categories: Fiction For Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/bang.jpgBang!

by Sharon G. Flake  
  
Published by Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 2005  
304 pages  
ISBN: 0786818441  
  
Ages 13-16

Ever since his little brother Jason was killed in a drive-by shooting, Mann has had a hard time. Between his own sadness and unsettled feelings and his parents’ grief, his is a house of pain. Life is so treacherous in his urban neighborhood that Mann’s best friend, Kee-Lee, keeps a running body count. One of Mann’s few outlets for his feelings is painting, but his father wants to make a real man out of Mann. Fiercely determined not to lose another son, he irrationally decides that Mann, and Kee-Lee too, will benefit from an old African tribal ritual in which boys were abandoned to find their own ways home. He takes Mann and Kee-Lee camping and leaves them. It is an exhausting, sometimes terrifying five-day journey home. Mann is not a man when he returns, just a very angry adolescent boy who understandably feels abandoned. He and Kee-Lee run away and are soon drawn into a sordid life of alcohol, drugs, and crime. In trying to save his son, it seems Mann’s father has destroyed him. Sharon G. Flake’s sobering novel looks unflinchingly at the spiraling tragedies in an African American family caused by guns and violence. As hard and harrowing as her story is, Flake offers hope as well. Mann is smart and knows he needs to break free from the life in which he is trapped. His art provides the first handhold. But Mann begins to realizes he won’t go much farther without also finding peace, which begins with forgiveness. CCBC Category: Fiction for Young Adults.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/beggingforchange.jpgBegging for Change

by Sharon G. Flake  
  
Published by Jump at the Sun / Hyperion, 2003  
235 pages  
ISBN: 0-7868-0601-X  
  
Ages 12 - 15

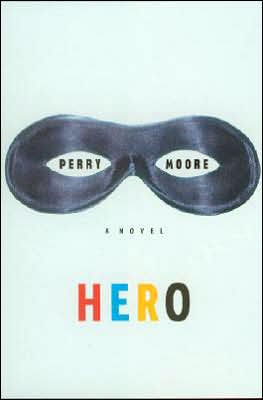
Everything seems such a struggle to teenager Raspberry Hill. She and her mother are no longer homeless, but every step forward, like having an apartment, has its downside--in this case, a threatening young neighbor who puts Raspberry's mother in the hospital. When Raspberry, who is always looking for ways to make money, sees a wad of bills in her friend Zora's purse, she takes the money. After all, everything is so easy for Zora, whose father is a doctor. But nothing is the same afterward. Zora doesn't trust her, and wants Raspberry to tell their friends and family what she's done. Meanwhile Raspberry's luck--rarely good in her opinion--seems to spiral downward. When Zora accuses Raspberry of being just like Raspberry's father--who steals some of Raspberry's hard-earned money (to support his crack cocaine habit), Raspberry aches at the thought it might be true. Sharon Flake's first-person narrative is alive with the words and feelings of a young African American teen trying to make sense of herself and the people around her--good people trying their best to live a good life--in this novel that underscores how challenges both within and beyond one's own control, from personal choices to race and class prejudice, can make the struggle for a better life hard. Strong family, friendships and community ties that often sustain but sometimes challenge Raspberry and her mother form the backdrop of this moving and powerful novel. (MS; Nov 10) ©2003 Cooperative Children's Book Center

# http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/_images/books/fatkidrules.jpgFat Kid Rules the World

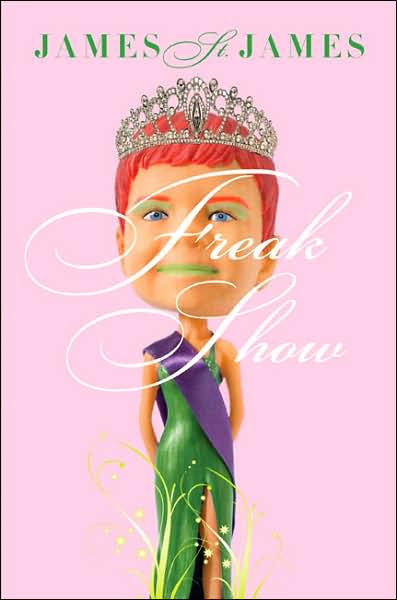
by K.L. Going  
  
Published by Putnam, 2003  
187 pages  
ISBN: 0-399-23990-1  
  
Ages 15 - 18

At 296 pounds, Troy Billings is undeniably a fat kid, and an unhappy one. As his story begins, Troy is contemplating suicide as he stands at the edge of a subway platform, wondering if he should jump. This action, like everything he does, whether insignificant or momentous, is shaded by Troy's belief that he is defined by his weight, and consequently, viewed as a joke. An exception to this rule is demonstrated by punk-rocker extraordinaire Curt MacCrae, a modern legend at Troy's high school for his skill on the guitar and his defiance of rules and expectations. Curt distracts Troy from his suicidal subway moment, and offers him the position of drummer for a new band. Troy hasn't played the drums since a feeble attempt in junior high, but he grasps Curt's invitation like a lifeline. The unlikely friendship that develops between the two is as complex as it is true. Along with his musical talent, Curt has monumental problems of his own, ranging from his dysfunctional family, to his current homeless state, to serious drug use. Troy discovers that he is much more than a self-defined "fat kid," and he is able to reciprocate Curt's friendship in a significant and thoughtful way, with far-reaching implications. Often uproariously funny, this novel for older teenagers is also gritty, with strong language and situations. The author provides windows into both Troy and Curt's worlds, while commendably resisting the temptation to solve Troy's problems with a convenient weight loss. CCBC Categories: Fiction for Children.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Hero

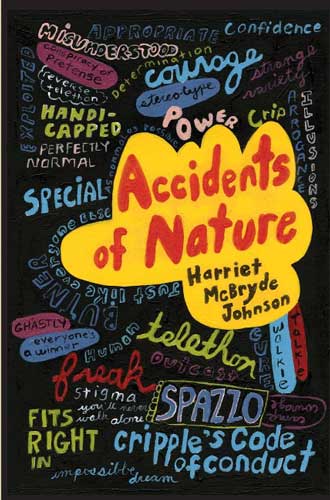
by Perry Moore  
  
Published by Hyperion , 2007  
428 pages  
ISBN: 1–4231–0195–2  
  
Age 12 and older

High school basketball star Thom Creed’s father is a disgraced, washed-up superhero. Thom’s father is a bitter, emotionally distant man who has made it clear that he has no time for either superheroes or “fruits.” So Thom feels it necessary to hide two profound aspects of who he is. He knows he is gay and he also knows that he has a superpower of his own: he can heal living things just by touching them. When Thom’s talent comes to the attention of a superhero organization known as the League, he’s invited to audition for membership. He’s placed on a team of hopefuls that must compete against other teams of prospective Legaue members. Disagreements and clashing personalities among members of Thom’s team are challenging enough. To make things even more complicated, Thom has had a long-standing crush on a League superhero named Uberman, and his attempts to impress him always seem to fall short. In his non-superhero life, Thom is attracted to a boy on a rival basketball team whom he meets for early morning workout sessions. Their encounters are intense and electric and Thom feels a definite attraction, but is it mutual? When Thom is forced to out himself to his father and to the League, he is immediately terminated from the probationary team. But the adventure doesn’t end there. It turns out that a tremendous threat against humanity is being mounted from within the League, and Thom joins forces with his former teammates, his father, and one very mysterious superhero to save the day. Hero is a funny, entertaining, action-packed story about a gay teen’s search for his place in the world, and for people he can trust and love, whether they have superpowers or not.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

Freak Show

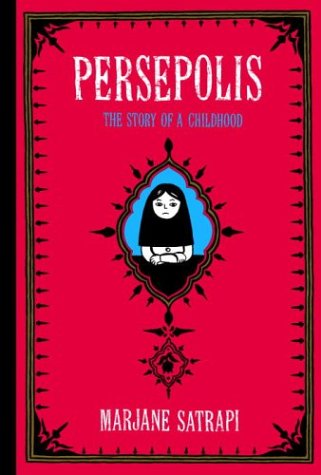
by James St. James  
  
Published by Dutton, 2007  
298 pages  
ISBN: 0-525-47799-3  
  
Age 13 and older

Could Billy Bloom be any more fabulous? Having just moved from Darien, Connecticut, to finish out his senior year in a conservative suburb of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Billy faces extreme culture shock: he is a teenage drag queen, super freak and self-proclaimed gender obscurist. He has great wit, style, and attitude; unfortunately, his classmates at Dwight D. Eisenhower Academy don’t appreciate him. From the moment he throws open the door to his first period Biology class, wearing a ruffled lace shirt, high-waisted blue pants, and a Prussian-blue military jacket (”What’s straighter than a pirate?”), Billy becomes the school pariah. He’s gay-baited and queer-bashed relentlessly, particularly by the Backseat Boys, as Billy calls the members of the varsity football team who occupy the last row of seats in the classroom. In the face of daily taunting, pummeling and general humiliation, Billy maintains his dignity and his sense of humor. Even though he curls up in a cupboard and cries after school at home, he courageously returns to school each day, daring to be himself. Not since Weetzie Bat has there been such an original, campy novel for teens. Beneath Billy Bloom’s hilariously melodramatic rantings and capitalized pronouncements, there’s a serious story about a sensitive boy’s search for love and acceptance. There’s also a strong streak of social satire running throughout the book, as Billy makes his witty, acerbic observations about life in the “reddest of the red states… where even the crustiest crack whore is a registered Republican and Gloria Estefan is inexplicably the biggest star in the world.” (KTH) ©2007 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

Accidents of Nature

by Harriet McBryde Johnson  
  
Published by Henry Holt, 2006  
229 pages  
ISBN: 0805076344   
  
Age 14 and older

Jean has cerebral palsy but doesn’t think of herself as crippled. At 17, she has spent all of her life working hard at fitting in. In fact, the week she is embarking on at Camp Courage is the first time she’s been around other disabled people. Sara, one of Jean’s bunkmates, has a challenging new perspective on Jean’s outlook: “Aw, come on. You’re a Crip. Otherwise you wouldn’t be in Crip Camp. Say it loud, ‘I’m crippled and proud.’” Jean has never doubted that it is her responsibility to fit in with the rest of society by conforming to their standards of normality. Sara dares Jean to think about conformity as false ideal. What’s wrong with the way they are? For Jean, who sees her one great failure as her inability to master walking, Sara’s radical ideas are unsettling to think about, but also liberating. Sara jars Jean from her deep-seated attitudes about herself and the world in which she lives, a world in which people like Sara and Jean are seen as less-than, or invisible, or pitied and made the focus of well-meaning initiatives like telethons. Telethons, Sara asserts, make “normal” people feel good while perpetuating the idea that disabled people need to be fixed. Jean’s change over her week at Camp Courage is told in a first-person voice that is often humorous, and sometimes painfully intimate, giving readers an eye-opening perspective on living in our world with a disability. A biographical note states that the author attended schools for children with disabilities and went to a cross-disability summer camp as a teenager. A lawyer who focuses on benefits and civil rights claims for poor and working people with disabilities, Harriet McBryde Johnson holds “the world endurance record […] for protesting the Jerry Lewis telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.” (MVL) ©2006 Cooperative Children’s Book Center

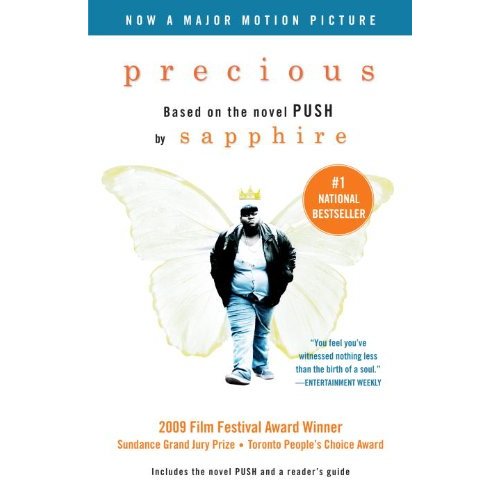
Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood

by Marjane Satrapi  
  
Published by Pantheon, 2003  
160 pages  
ISBN: 0-375-42230-7  
  
Age 15 and older

Marjane Satrapi chose a unique medium, the "graphic memoir," to tell the story of her childhood and early teen years living in Iran. Marjane was ten when the Shah was overthrown in 1979 at the start of the Islamic Revolution. Crisp black-and-white cartoon images and spare but powerful text combine to describe a childhood that is truly divided and threatened by the repression of the government. Satrapi contrasts her private life inside the home of her liberal parents and her public life in school and on the streets of Tehran. The veil she is required to wear as a result of the Islamic Revolution cannot mask the fact that she is smart, funny, and gutsy. But it also cannot mask the fear she feels with the increasing oppression, especially as she learns of the new regime's arrest, torture, and sometimes murder of her family's friends and relatives, despite her parents' attempts to shelter her from this knowledge. (Like any curious child, Marjane eavesdrops, but sometimes regrets learning what she overhears.) In the turn of a single page, Satrapi can conjure up fear and anger in one moment, and joy and laughter in another. The horrors of war and of the torture experienced by domestic "enemies" of the new regime are powerfully depicted, making Satrapi's droll humor, which shows up often, a surprising and priceless respite. (In the book's opening series of panels, she has drawn a picture of five identical little girls in veils. The figure on the left is cut off by the edge of the frame, so only a portion of her shows. Satrapi tells us it's her class picture, and she is the one on the left.) For her own safety, Satrapi is eventually sent by her parents to live in Europe, a decision that is clearly painful for all three of them. Persepolis was published for adults in the United States. We have included it in this edition of CCBC Choices because of its unique content, and because the format often lends itself to a crossover audience. But mature content, from violence to occasional nudity, makes it a work we recommend for older teens. CCBC categories: Biography and Autobiography.  © Cooperative Children's Book Center

**Adult**

Sapphire. (1996). *Push : a novel.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf. (Available at CSU)

Claireece Precious Jones endures unimaginable hardships in her young life. Abused by her mother, raped by her father, she grows up poor, angry, illiterate, fat, unloved and generally unnoticed. So what better way to learn about her than through her own, halting dialect. That is the device deployed in the first novel by poet and singer Sapphire. "Sometimes I wish I was not alive," Precious says. "But I don't know how to die. Ain' no plug to pull out. 'N no matter how bad I feel my heart don't stop beating and my eyes open in the morning." An intense story of adversity and the mechanisms to cope with it.

Thorpe, H. (2009). *Just like us: The true story of four Mexican girls coming of age in America.* New York: Scribner.

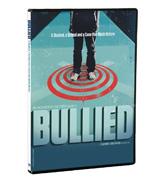
[](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.bookapex.com/images/Just-Like-Us-The-True-Story-of-Four-Mexican-Girls-Coming-of-Age-in-America-1416538933-L.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.bookapex.com/Just-Like-Us-The-True-Story-of-Four-Mexican-Girls-Coming-of-Age-in-America-reviews-1416538933_4.htm&usg=__VDuzEoLjNcN-pfCFiAySp_eHYh8=&h=500&w=331&sz=27&hl=en&start=3&zoom=1&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=adRRJMX6IJvckM:&tbnh=130&tbnw=86&prev=/images?q=four+girls+coming+of+age+in+america&um=1&hl=en&sa=N&rls=com.microsoft:en-us&rlz=1I7GPEA_enUS292&tbs=isch:1)

By the time Marisela, Yadira, Clara and Elissa—four girls of Mexican descent from the suburbs of Denver—entered their freshman year in high school, they were inseparable, but four years later, their fundamental difference threatened to divide them: Clara and Elissa were legal residents, but Marisela and Yadira had begun to suffer the repercussions of their parents' choice to illegally enter the U.S. Journalist Thorpe, married to Denver mayor John Hickenlooper, met them as the girls without legal status were finding their friends' liberties—big and small—to attend college, drive or even rent a movie unbearable. It was hard for Marisela and Yadira to see why they should labor over their homework if they were just going to end up working at McDonald's, Thorpe writes. Marisela slid into trouble with ease, but Yadira found the experience profoundly disorienting. With striking candor, Thorpe chronicles the girls' lives over four years, delineating the small but arresting differences that will separate them and shape their futures. She personalizes the ongoing debate over immigration and frames it so compassionately and sensibly that even the staunchest opponents of immigration liberalization might find themselves rethinking their positions.

**Movies**

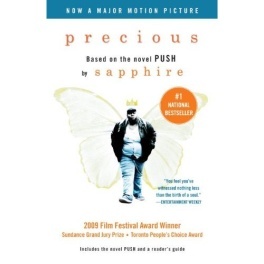
[](http://www.imdb.com/media/rm4278099200/tt0168786)Antwone Fisher [videorecording] / Fox Searchlight Pictures presents a Mundy Lane/Todd Black production, a Denzel Washington film ; produced by Todd Black, Randa Haines, Denzel Washington ; written by Antwone Fisher ; directed by Denzel Washington. [United States] : 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, [2003], c2002. (Available CSU library)

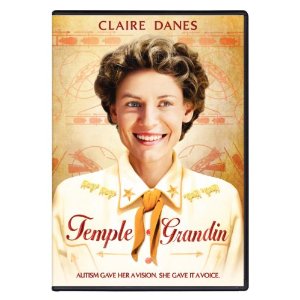
Autobiographical movies rarely get more truthfully moving than Antwone Fisher. The title is also the name of this fine drama's first-time screenwriter, a former Navy seaman who was working as a film-studio security guard when his life-inspired script was developed as Denzel Washington's directorial debut. This Hollywood dream gets better: unbeknownst to the filmmakers, Derek Luke--a newcomer who won the title role over a throng of famous contenders--was also a friend of Fisher's, and the whole film seems blessed by this fortunate coincidence. Washington's sharp instincts as an actor serve him well, as both a subtle-handed director and Luke's costar playing Jerome Davenport, a Navy psychologist assigned to assess Fisher's chronic violent temper. Their therapy sessions prove mutually beneficial, as this touching true story addresses painful memories, broken desires, and heartfelt reunions without resorting to a contrived happy ending. Fisher's good life is worth celebrating, and Washington brings a delicate touch to the party. *--Jeff Shannon*

*Bullied: A student, a school and a case that made history* (2010). Teaching Tolerance. [Motion Picture].

Bullied is a documentary film that chronicles one student’s ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies and offers an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today. It can become a cornerstone of anti-bullying efforts in middle and high schools.

*Precious* the movie based on the novel *Push*.



*Temple Grandin.* (2010). HBO Movie.

Based on the writings by its title subject, HBO Films’ Temple Grandin is an engaging portrait of an autistic young woman who became, through timely mentoring and sheer force of will, one of America’s most remarkable success stories.

**Professional Texts**

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| --- |
| Delpit, L. (2006). *Other people’s children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: The New Press. |
| Esquith, R. (2003). *There are no shortcuts* (1st ed.). New York: Anchor Books.  Esquith, R. (2007). *Teach like your hair’s on fire.* New York: Viking Penguin. |
| Howard, G. (2006). *We can’t teach what we don’t know: White teachers, multiracial schools.* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. |
| Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2004). Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2004). *The essential conversation:* [*What parents and teachers can learn from each other*](http://www.amazon.com/Essential-Conversation-Parents-Teachers-Learn/dp/0345475801/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1258048905&sr=1-1)New York: Ballentine Books.New York: Ballentine Books. |
| Noguera, P.. (2008). [*The trouble with black boys: And other reflections on race, equity, and the future of public education*](http://www.amazon.com/Trouble-Black-Boys-Reflections-Education/dp/0470452080/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1254424806&sr=1-1)*.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass |
| Thompson, G. (2004). *Through ebony eyes: what teachers need to know but are afraid to ask about African American students.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. |
| Williams, B. (2003). *Closing the achievement gap: A vision for changing beliefs and practices.* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development |